¶ A christē exhortacion vnto customable swearers.

¶ What a righte & lawfull othe is: whan, and before whom it ought to be.

✠

¶ Item. The maner of saying grace, or geuyng thākes vnto God.

By Miles Couerdale.

Whosoeuer heareth Goddes worde, beleue it, and do thereafter, shall be saued.

1543

William Bostock his
book and wholly Int-
[illegible] Bostock Bro-

[illegible] to ab.
man that
[illegible] the Lord

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07-87

Graces increase of knowledge from God the father, through our Lord Jesus Christe be with the Christen Reader, & with al other of my contremen that loue the lord vnfaynedlye. In the lordes vineyard, (deare frend) I se men in thys age busilye occupyed roote oute the wedes of inueterate vyces and olde cancred customes. Some hath preached agaynste superstitions. Some hath written againste Purgatorye and pardons. Some hath inueyed agaynst Pylgrimages and sectes. Some hathe beaten downe monasteryes and shrynes, ydolles and their aulters. Some seketh yet to thys daye to destroye poyphe decrees, to abolish vayne Ceremonyes, to restore necessary rites, and to bryng agayne all thynges to Christes fyrst institucion. All these thynges are Godlye, I denye it not. and men vertuouslye exercysed in so doynge. But these for the most parte hath parteyned, and yet stil do[illegible] partayne, to the monstruous kyngedome of Antechriste or dysgysed Churche of hipocrites. Which hath euermore had

a great shewe of glysteringe pretence of godlinesse, thoughe they haue (after saynct Paule) denyed the power therof. But the abhominable custome of swearynge or dayly blasphemynge of the blessed name of God (whiche is of the deuylles kyngdom throughout, without any colours to the contrary) hath bene fewe or none rebuked, specially in theyr wrytynges. Wherfore I haue conceyued it a thynge moost necessary to set forth somwhat concernynge the rebuke therof, to put me in remembrance of the seruice least they shuld through custome forget God. So hath this execrable abuse increased amonge the people, that rather it hath bene coūted a vertue than a vice, bringe the open doze vnto dampnation. Yea so deply hath this pestilent poyson infected the wyttes of men, that nothynge seameth pleasaunt vnto them, fresshe, or worthye to be laughed at, vnlesse it be ioyned with the blasphemye of Gods holy name. The tale shal lacke his due circumstance vnlesse it be myxed with othes. As with bloode, woundes, death, and sydes, with curssynges and bānynges, as pore, pestilence, foule euell chaūce, vengeaunce, and myschefe, to bidde to be dyed among the deuell in helle. Oh merciful God, how can

can they thinke them selfes worthy of the name of Christianes, vsynge suche deuyllysh ces? how can they hope to be saued in Christ, vtteryng oute of all Christen ozder such outragious blas= phemy? muche mozе godly shoulde the Christiane be, than eyther Jewe oz Pagane, yet is he a thousande tymes wozse in his conuersacion and life. A= monge al vyces wherunto the corrupt nature of our nacion is geuen (foz the mozе parte) is blasphemye and whoze= dome, though the fyrste of them be dy= rectely against the thirde commaunde= ment of God in the firste table, and the other against the thirde in the seconde table (which is the seuenth in nombze) yet are they in dayly custome. God not feared, noz yet their dāger considered. And why? They that should be ỹ salte of the earthe, are become vnsauerye, and whereas they ought to geue vs the lyght of good liuing, they offer vs dar= kenesse. Neyther is the corrupcion of execrable swearynge takē from vs by the seasonable doctryne of oure prela= tes & priestes, noz yet by their shining exāples a way left vs to forsake stinc= kynge whoredō. Rather do they shewe vs a playne pathe vnto them both. Foz no where shall you fynde mozе othes, noz of mozе dyuerse kindes, thā in bis=

Hoppes houses. And as for common whores you shall haue so many, not farre from some of their houses as are able to serue the fylthye flocke of an whole cõtre. Their eyes are so spirituall, that they cã not see these blottes. These sauers cã they not smel though they go by them euery daye. So small feare haue they to God, and so lytle good will beare they, to the honorable state of matrymonye. But yf a poore man begynneth to fauer the veryte of the Lord, they cã smel hym out though he be ryght mylde of. But with these thynges will they not medle. And why? they are but the necessarye for a common wealth. By good handsome swearing men appere valeaunte, and no faynte harted towardes. The stewes are permitted as an wholesome politique ordinaũce to auoyde a greater inconuenyence. For elles (saye they) honest mennes wifes should not liue in reste. Oh beastly bely goddes, may you by your polytique ordinaunces (contrary saint Paules doctrine) suffer an euyl thing that good may come therof? Faythfull wyues will contynue in their honesty whan you, and al whorehunters shall go to the deuel. It geueth rather an occasyon to wyues, and maydens to be naughte. For whan the wyfe is dyspo-

sed

sed to be an whore, she knoweth wher to be receyued. Henye a mayde lykes wyse, when a wanton felow hath gotten vp her bealye she muste strayghte waye to the stewes. Yf her master or maystres see any wanton touche with her, and than (as it becometh them) tel her of it, she let the lesse by them, and al because of the stewes. And it is a comon sayinge, were there no receyuer there should be no theefe. So were ther no stewes, there should not so many honest mennes doughters runne awaye from their fathers, and play the whores as doth. Oh detestable hypocrytes, what honeste man can thynke the breakinge of Goddes commaundementes to furder a Christen laude: why are princes, magistrates, and iudges put in aucthoritie but onely to se them obserued: why are you made bisshoppes, but onely to perswade thē to the same: Neuer bringe you an outragious blasphemer, nor a comon aduouterer to open shame before the worlde, at Paules crosse, thoughe there be neuer so many. Neuer labour you to the kynge and his councell for a reformacion to be had of these moost execrable vyces, thoughe you knowe them to be moost hurtefull to a Christen comon wealthe, you can wynke at suche gre-

nous euyll es, and suffre them to be ta-
ken as n[illegible]es. It was not without
a cause that Christ called you blasphe
mous, and aduouterous generacion.
It is not for nought, that ꝑ scripture
geueth you so manye odyous names.
As Straungers, beastes, aduersaryes.
dreamers, colubers, beipais, dome dog
ges, rauoninge wolues, serpētes, leui-
athās, bastardes, traitors, destroyers.
theues, ydolles, men of synne, sonnes
of perdition, vnshamefast lyers, wyc-
ked doers, enemyes to the truethe, vn-
cleane fowles, deuilles incarnate, blind
leaders of the blinde, hipocrites, hire-
lynges, false prophetes, vil sede, wyth
an. C. more, you wil make goddes cō-
maundementes of no effecte, to auoyde
greater inconuenience. Oh detestable
enemyes to the trueth, what inconue-
nience can be greater, than to neglecte
the lawes of God? dothe he not thre-
ten to them that breake his commaun-
dementes al this fearfull plages? As
derthe, barenesse scarsenes, nede, hun-
ger, thurste, pouertye, penury, the pla-
ges and sicknesses of Egypt, pestilēce
sore, botche-feuers, colicke, heate, em-
roges, scalle, mange, meselles, mad-
nesse, losse of goodes, wyndes, blastes,
waters withering, wasting, burning,
drought, rayne, oppression, robberye,

theues

theues, rape, il fortune, captiuite, exile, wzechednes, subiection, daurger, pri-
son, stokes, stripes, shame, cowardnes, blindnes, errour, dasing of herte, des-
peracion, thought, vnquietnesse, toyle, bandage, warre, fyre, swearde, battell, feare, tremlynge, sorowe, shorte lyfe, and sodeine death both of body and soule. And al this you weye not at all. You are so vnmercyfull, that you care not to se them droppe headlynges into hel. So that you haue the fees, you passe not what become neyther of bodye nor soule. Wel is that people, whom God hath deliuered from suche vnpytefull gurdes. Therfore we poore wzetches, ought to gene moost harty thankes vnto the Lorde (seynge the salt is be-
come so vnsauery) which hath geue vs such a prynce, suche a faythfull Josy-
as, and godly minister, that hath resto
red agayne the pure word of god, and hath graunted vs all fre passage vnto it, wherin we may lerne to auoyd these vyces, with all other. This woorde of God, is the mother Perle, that we ought with al diligēce to seke, & papye that we ought to sucke, and the table that we should eate vpon. From thēce should we fetch & substenaūce of health, the breade of lyfe & wyne of gladnesse, the refreshynge waters, the feadynge

of

of the spirite, the lyghte of the soule: yea, it is the very touch stone that trieth all thynges. And this afore tyme, was hydden from vs, by the tree of the serpente, the sacrifyces of Antichriste, the sorcerers of Egypte, with the mysteries. Geue thankes therfore yet agayne vnto God whiche hathe in these latter dayes so mercyfully vysyted vs frō aboue, and hath set our feete in the pathwayes, of his peace.

So be it.

✠

IF one natural being hath ꝑ lord frō ꝑ beginning cōstitute al mē to this ende, ꝑ they should naturally loue, helpe, & cōforte one an o= ther. And to the perfourmaunce of that hys pleasure added he this naturall lawe, that they should conſyder within themselues what they would haue done to their owne bo dies, children, goodes, or catel, & vpon that groūde to conceyue a rewle howe to vse al other particuler persones. ¶ If they would not ꝑ men should oppresse thē, vi repeir thē, shame thē before the world, hire their houses ouer their hea des, set them yll wares, begyle thē by false waight and measure, with suche lyke, that they should in any wyse be ware, leaste they do the same vnto thē. This naturall lawe was vnto Adam, Seth, Enoch, Noe, Abrahā, Moyses, and other godly men, a grounded pre= cept of lyuynge, whome they euermore folowed in their outwarde occupy= inges.

¶ necessary doc= trine of loue.

Exam= ples of the holye fathers.

Another

Cõtemp ners of these holy fathers.

Another sort ther were which myn= ded nothynge lesse, and they contrary= wyse, for want of that rewle, fell in to al maner of abhompnable synnes. As Gen.iiii. Cain into the vnnaturall murder of Gen.ix. hys brother. The giauntes into filthy desyres of the flesh. Nimroth into cru= el oppressyon, and tyranny. Cham in to a scornefull disdayne of his father. Is= macll into a stubberne wyckednesse a= gainst al mẽ. Esau into a mortall hate of Jacob hys brother. And suche lyke. So that daily more and more for decay ef that law (which god hath inwardly writẽ in the hartes of men) great mis= Ose.iiii. chefes increased. And as Oseas ỹ pro= phete cõplaineth, ther was no faithful nesse, no brotherlye loue, no trueth a= monge men, but bytternesse, lying, mã= slaughter, theste, and aduoutrye harde gotten the ouerhande. In their daily occupyinge was muche falsehed vsed, and that was thought wel wõne good that was gotte by deceyte. Very seldõ in their bargaines were promises per fourmed, & more seldome a great deale, was faythful honest regarded. In pro cesse of tyme therfore, were very fewe or none beleued, vnlesse they toke God to wytnesse that the matter was true, wherupon fyrste of all came vp the swearynge of othes amonge mẽ to cõ=

What so loued ỹ Cõtempt.

firme

fyxme their sayinges with.

An othe is no yll matter, godlye vsed and done in loue, thoughe the deuyll from the begynnyng hath abused it. For what is there in ỳ world, be it neuer so clene and good, but mennes corrupte nature doth moost abhominable defyle.

what is an oth, & to what end it serueth. Psa. xxiij Exo. 22. Heb. vi.

An othe is a waye or meane whereby controuersies are ended, and promises performed, by the callynge vpon the name of god. For it is writtē in ỳ law, if a man deliuer vnto his neighboure, ore, asse, or shepe, to pasture, and it die, or be hurte, or driuen awaye (no man seing it) than shall an othe of the lorde go betwene them, and he shall sweare whether he hath put anye hande to the takīg away of his neighbours good or not, and the owner of the good shal receaue the othe, & yt be by the othe that he hath takē, saith, that he hath put no hand to it, thā shal he not make it good &c. And this muste be done before the goddes, that is to saye, before the iudges or magistrates. Here is the controuersy ended betwene neighbor & neighboure, throughe an othe. It is also a meane wherby promises are performed. As we fynde in Gen. xxi. cha. the wordes of Abimelech vnto Abraham, that he shoulde neyther hurte him, nor

Judges are called goddes in scripture

Gen. xxi

hys

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Gen. xxi

hys posterytie, vnto whome Abraham sayde, I wyl swere. And therefore sayeth, that they swore bothe. And Abraham did not only swear, but also performed it in dede. This is called a ryghte or lawfull oth, and none other. This othe is a certen kinde of religiō, wherwith God is not onely honored, but also well cōtented & pleased. Thys is a sure author, whervnto Iudges maye lawfully sythe, whan their wittes can go no further. For who knoweth what is in mā, but god only? Thys right and lawfull oth was commaunded of God for the comforte, helpe, and succoure of our neyghboure. And it is called the othe of the Lord, not onely because he cōmaunded it, but also whā he made his mightie promyse vnto Abrahā he swore him selfe, to cause hym to beleue it, not to be impossible at the tyme appointed. Whā a matter is in sute before a iudge necessarye it is to swear, yf it be required, to bringe it to a conclusiō. And in lyke case it is with denaūdynge of an othe, as with strykynge with the sworde. Lawful is it not for euerye pryuate persone at hys owne luste to swere. But to the magistrates, whan they se iust cause, it is not only lawful but also an office of dewtye belongyng vnto them vnder payne of

A lawful othe.

Gene. 22

Magistrates may only requyre it.

Deut. 24

Iust cōparison.

godres

goddes hie displeasure,

Hely was punished of God, for not correcteynge hys children, and so was kyng Saule for sparyng the people of Amalech. The princes of regyons haue the swoorde geuen them by goddes authoritie, not to reuenge their owne priuate quarell, but the iust quarell of God and hys people. In lyke condicō is it with swearynge. Yf the cause be not theirs but their neyghbours, they maye lawfull receaue an othe, and the other required maye lykewyse sweare in tryall of the trueth and not synne. Yet ought it none otherwise to be done than in the name & feare of the Lorde, lest we should ascribe the deryte to anye other than to hym. And they iustely sweare by hys name and wythoute repyoue, which minding neither fraude nor deceite, witnesseth onely the truth whiche seketh no percyalrte, but the ryghte, not them selues, but the glorye of God, the profyte of theyr neyghboure, and the cōmon welth of goddes people,

1.re.xiii. and. xv. Luk. 22 Leu.xix

For y cō mon welth one lye. Deu.vi.

Who sweareth a right

who an. othe is lawfull.

Lawfull it is also for the magistrates, whan they put any man in office to take an othe of hym, that he shall be true, diligent and faithfull therein, as Iacob, for the commodite and profyte of his posterite, tooke an othe of Laban

the

ydolatrer. Likewise Judas Machabeus of the Romaynes, for the same purpose. And this is because ther hath bene and yet are dayly founde so many vnfaythfull of their subiectes and comons many princes demaunde an oth of allegyaunce, for ỳ sauegard of their landes & people And that if ouide not nede, wer ther no false traitors abrod, yet is it dyscretly to be cõsydred in all suche publyque othes, whether they haue ỳ .iii. aforenamed thinges or not. To sweare to do yl, as to slee, to rauish, or to robbe is dãpnable without faile, and to performe suche an othe, or to do those wyckednesses in dede is a double dampnacyon, both to him ỳ so sweareth, and also to the iudge that causeth him to sweare. Suche a one was the cursed othe, that kynge Herode made, vnto the daughter of Herodyas hys harlotte, for the heade of holye Johñ baptist, whom Christe calleth a wyly fore for his crafty conueyaunce.

A damp nable oth

Mar. vi Luc. xiii

A colour was this othe, of his cruell tyranny, & a cloke to his moste spightfull murther. For throughe that meanes was Johñ done vnto death. Nether was an othe ordeyned (after the mynde of saincte Austen) to bynde to the performaunce of manslaughter, robberye, ydolatrye, or other synnes

Ad seruum malè promissum.

Rather

vnto customable swearers. Fol. 9.

Rather had Dauid breke his othe, the to fulfyll it with bloude shedynge.

A kiges worde ought to stande.

I sayinge ther is amōg me, that the word, promes or othe of a kynge shuld stande. We graunte the same, in case it be trus, iuste, and expedyente. Elles were it much better, to be brokē than kept. Better were a kinge to eate hys worde an. C tymes, or to call it home agayne, than ones to be dampned for the performaunce of it, if it be wycked. For a kynge or rewler is not ordeyned to do his owne luste, but to iudge accordinge to ryght and equyte. As open is hel for him, as for a poore man, yf he rule not hys people godlye.

Psal. lxi.

Dauyd brake his othe.

Dauid made a solempne othe, to slee Nabal, and to destroy all that pertayned vnto hym, but he neuer dyd performe that othe, & yet he was a kynge. He put vp hys swearde againe (sayeth Bede) and neuer repented hym of anye faute done. Homel. xiv.

Othes are to be obserued, when ther ende is not euyl, nor vnto the hynderaunce of soules helth. In wicked promises (sayeth Isidorus) let faythfulnes haue no place. In a fylthye bowe. chaunge thy decreed purpose. Do not fylthye the thinge in effect that thou hast with bowes put consyderacyon sworne vnto. For ought to the promysse is euermore wicked, that be broke.

In simonia. xxxv. q.

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A vayn othe.

Mat. vi. Luc. viii

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Ad sententiam male

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In simonia mis. li. 4.

Fylthye bowes ought to be brokē.

cā not be perfourmed wout sin. Therfore yf the iudges or rulers shuld inforce ỹ inferiour subiectes to sweare to ỹ thig that were against soules helth or goddes honour, as to worshyppe an ydole, or to an innocētes vndoing, they ought rather to dye than to obeye it. As dyd for an exaumple the discrete mā, and honorable father Eleazarus, with ỹ. vii. faithfull brethren, & their mother in the Machabees. For much better is it in suche case to obeye God than man, as witnesseth Peter & the other apostles. Neyther ought a iudge by the lawe, to compel a man to sweare against himselfe, leaste he inforce him wickedlye to synne in forswearynge himself, and so to dyspayre of the mercy of God. But whā he taketh an othe of a poore symple soule, or of a crafty subtyll felowe, he ought to consider all circumstances requisite. And al such as sweare othes ought lyke wyse to be circumspect and ware. And to se alwaies ỹ this clause be added vnto them. Yf my Lorde God wyl, or yf I haue no lawful impedimēt to the contrary. And thā shal we make oure promyses perfoght. Yf I shoulde chaunce to appoynt with the magistrates to come before them, at suche an houre, and in the meane tyme be letted by terrible sickenesse, I shoulde thus breake

2. Macha vi. 8. vii.

Iet. v.

Leui. xix

Pro. xxv

This must be added, yf god wyl.

Roma. i.

vnto cuſtomable ſwearers. Fol. 10

breake no iuſt promeſſe made vnto thē, yf I come not. Neyther ſhould I breake conuenaunte (as ſaith ſaincte Auſtine) If I promyſed a paymente at a daye, and were robbed of my moneye by the waye, comynge thyther warde. With ſuch other like. Neuer am I forſworne nor vniuſte of my promeſſe, ſo longe as my hert myndeth no deceyte. Where o- ther ſuche doubtes and perplexe caſes there be but theſe I ſuppoſe for thys tyme ſufficient. By theſe may all other be perceaued and chriſtianlye ordred. Thus [illegible] not we deny, al maner of ſwe ryng though we would none othes to be vſed betwene neighboure & neyghbour, nor yet in our priuate cōmunicacions, & daily buſines. As hereafter we ſhal declare it more at large. I woulde haue wrytten much more of this right and lawful othe, which is commaūded of God for the wealthe and healthe of mē, yf other chriſtiā lerned mē had not writtē ſufficiently therof afore. Agayn for ſo much as the matter of it ſelfe belongeth rather vnto the office of rulers and iudges, then to ſuche priuate perſons as I here wryte vnto, yet let bothe the iudges, and inferioure ſubiectes, marke and obſerue theſe leſſons folowynge.

Auguſt. de ſermone domini in monte.

God hath neceſſite excuſed.

When a iuge may require an othe.

Fyrst a iudge, ought neuer to demaūd, or requyre an othe of anye man, wythout greate heuynes of conscyence, for feare that ỹ party required to sweare, should forsweare hym self. Such loue & pitie oughte ther to be in iudges, ỹ the losse of their neighbours soule, should be estemed equall wythe detrimente of ther owne soules. Therfore before they bringe thē vnto an othe, they oughte to seke al wayes & meanes how to trie the trueth woute an othe, & not immediatly, & in al ỹ haste to cause thē to sweare.

Judges ought to be pitiful

Secōdly. The iudge may demaunde an othe, and the inferiour subiect likewise sweare, when it is eyther to the glory of God, the profyte of our neyghboure, or for the comon welthe.

Math. v

Thirdly, though mē be fully persuaded to haue lawful and iust occasyons to sweare, as for the glory of God, the profyte of our neyghboure, and the cōmon welth, yet may they not be iudges in their owne causes, nor take oughte here in hande, by their owne authorite, but let the mater come before their iudges, for no law suffreth the here to do after thine owne pleasure, & what thou thynkeste beste. After thys sorte dyd Christē iudges vse them selues in requyringe of an othe, and lyke wyse faythful subiectes wyth a glade harte

No man maye be his own iudge.

in

vnto customable swearers fol. 11.
in rēdering their oth demaūded of thē.

If thou be captious, thou wylte paraduenture fynde Cauillation of contrarietie in the scripture; And saye þ Moses here semeth to speake contrary vnto that Christ hath spoken in Mathew the fyfte Chapter. Because it is sayde here, yf any man geueth to kepe, Asse, ore, or shepe, &c. Thā the oth of þ lorde shall go betwene them, and there thou shalt in case sweare. This was fyrste *the errour of the Manachers whose sowers* are nowe þ anabaptistes. And all this cōmeth because they vnderstād not the sentence of Christe in the. v. of Mathew. This worde, *iurare*, hath an other maner of signification, than they do perceaue, and is other wise taken in the said. v. Chapter of Mathew, than they do teach. For this is to be beleued of all men, that God the father commaunded nothinge that should be preiudiciall or contrary his sonne nor yet that the sonne taughte any thinge contrarye his father. Therfore there is a swearyng which is lawfully approued and commaunded of god, of the whiche we haue made mēcion before called in Latine *iusiurandum*. Ther is also a swearing which is not lawful discommended, & clearly forbidde of christ. whiche is called *deiurium*, that is temerousnesse

Mat. v.

The errour of the anabaptistes.

the agremente of Christ & Moyses

What a temerousnesse the is.

to sweare in oure p̄yuate cōmunicatiō, be it true or false. And whā christ saith, thou shalt not sweare at al, he meaneth nothynge lesse than by it, to destroy all maner of lawfull swearinge before a iudge, but that we shuld neuer in our p̄yuate cōmunicacyon sweare, and as all maner of othes were not disalowed of Christ, no more were all othes alowed of God ꝑ father, but such only as had eyther the glorye of God, the profyt of our neighboure, or ꝑ cōmō wealth vpon their sydes. And that this is the very meanynge of Christes wordes, we shall well perceaue, by the weyng of the text. you haue hard, saith Christ, how it was said to them of the olde tyme, *non periurabis*. Where as oure translacion hathe, *non periurabis*, thou shalt not forsweare. And not all wyth out cause, for as *periurare* can neuer be *take in a good sence*, so is it not alwaye take for the transgressing or breakyng of a lawfull othe made before a iudge. But often times it is taken for *deierare* whiche is to take God to wytnesse, to lye or to deceiue. And *periurare* is lyke wise to abuse the names of god, which is the truerh and righteousnes, to lye, and deceiue. And what so euer he be, that eyther requyre his neyghboure to swere, or swere lightly him selfe, it is

How *periurare* is taken in the .v. of Math.

a sufficient proue, that he is a partures
ell, lighte, and one that lytle regardeth
Goddes truethe. Now whā christ saith,
it is sayde to them of the olde tyme, *non*
periurabis, thou shalte not forswears,
you shal neuer fynde in the Hebrew nor
in the Greke texte that worde, but so
shall you fynde in Moses. Thou shalt
not take the name of thy Lord God te- Exo. xx.
merously, where as oure interpreter
hath so. Thou shalt not take his name
in vayne. In another place also you Leui. xix.
haue after this sorte. Thou shalte not
sweare in my name to lye. Whiche the
Grekes interpretate after this fashiō,
thou shalt not swere fallsly in my name.
And the Latines haue, *non periurabis*.
Thou shalt not forswere in my name.
Here you may se how S. Jerom vse
this worde, to forswear, for *deierare*,
which is to swearе falsse. And not for ꝑ
transgressinge of a right & lawfull oth.
It was forbydden to them of the olde
tyme, (as you haue partly herde) that
they shoulde in no case, temerously
take the name of God to recorde which
is expounded in the sayde .xix. of Leui. The Je
that they shuld not swere in his name wes
to lie. Whereof sprange this opinio a- thought
monge them, that yf they dyd take the it no syn
name of god to wytnesse in the trewth to swere
and ꝑ in their daily busines betwene truly.

neighbour and neighbour (was no mā ner of synne) but in a false fayned mat-ter they thought they ought in no case to sweare, nor yet compel any other mā thereunto. And this is the thinge that Christ speaketh here against, and vtter ly reproueth, that is to say, that neyther in the trouth nor otherwise, they ought to take the name of God to recorde in their familiar and dayly communicacti on, but to speake so truly, & to deale so faithfully one with another, that if he sayd: yea, then hys neybour should be-leue him to saye truth, yf he sayde, nay, lykewyse to beleue it not to be truth. Here you se wel, is no maner of mencion made of a right and lawful othe, for christ saith, *audistis*, ye haue herd how it was sayde vnto thē of the olde tyme, *non periurabis*, thou shalt not forswear. Where is this spokē, euen ther where as is nothinge spoken at al, of the trās-gressinge or breaking of a lawful othe made before a iudge, as it shall appere more playnlye to him that wyll serche the places. Therfore it is manifest that Christ spake of such othes whereby we bind our selues temerously, to do or per fourme any maner of thig, it foloweth in the text. I say vnto you, sweare not at al, marke now of what swearing he speaketh, euen of suche swearynge as

Christē ought not to speake one thig & thynke another.

was

was (for their weaknes sake) permitted vnto them of the olde tyme, by the law, for as the Jewes were suffred by the law (for their weakenes sake) to be deuorced from their wiues (geuinge them a testimoniall in their handes) to auoide a further inconuenyence, that was, lest whan they were moued or angry with them, they shuld eyther haue poysonned or kylled them. So was to lykewyse permitted them of olde tyme to sweare (but not by all maner of creatures, but onelye in the name of God) leaste they, dwelling amonge the Heythen, and accustomynge their othes, should by continuaūce of time fall vnto the sylthy worshyppinge of their Idoles, forgettynge hym, sweare by hys name (saith Moyses) and se that you walcke not after straunge gods of the nations that you remaine amonge. So that you neyther make mencion, sayeth Josue, nor yet sweare by the names of their Goddes. Thus in the olde tyme were they suffred to swere in an ernest iust or weightie cause, but nowe commeth Christ, and sayth, that neyther in a true mater, be it neuer so great, ernest and weighte, we shal not of our owne selues, nor by our owne authority and pryuate power, sweare or promise any maner of thing. Where as yet no mater

They of the olde tyme were suffred to swere in ȳ truth

Deu. 6

Exo. 23.

Josu. 23

we may not swere yf ȳ mater be neuer so true.

ner of mencyon is made of a demaun-
ded othe by publique auctoryte. And
the wordes that folowe make the mat-
ter more plaine, neither by heuen, saith
Christ for it is the throne of God ney-
ther by erth &c. Where rede you that
at any time the Hebrues did vse to swere
by any of these thinges? And contrari-
wyse, who now a daies doth not for e-
very tryfle sweare by them al, one pro
myse a gyft by Christes crosse, another
by heauen, the thyrde by the earth. All
this doth christ clerely forbyd, & thys
is the summe of all his communicacy-
on. And where as the Anabaptistes ex
pounde this to be spoken of periurye,
which is taken for the transgression or
breakynge of that othe, which is made
before a iudge: they are greatly decey-
ued, for there is no mencyon made, ney
ther of the place, of the iudiciall seate,
nor yet of any magistrate or iudge, he
spake therfore of the othes, whiche we
vse one w̄ another in our familiar com
munication and language. And he that
wil serche the afore sayd places of Exo
di. and Leuiticum, both in the Hebrew
Greke & Latin, shal fynde it true, that
here is writtē, other reasons and argu
mentes they haue to take from the con-
gregacion *this lawful othe, whiche at*
another time shall be answered vnto.

The

The Pharisees also had blinded & corrupted this commaundement, for lyke as to haue in ỹ hearte or couet another mãs wyfe was no syn vñto thẽ, no more was it to thinke one thing in the herte and to speake another with the mouth Although Moyses sayd, Ye not, nor deceiue any mã his neighbour. Leui. x. They did interpretate it but for good counsel, & that it did bind no man vnder paine of dãnation, so by that meanes wer there none beleued, onelesse they toke God to wytnes, whã false, forcd & crafty marchantes once perceiued, that for taking of Goddes name to recorde, they were beleued whatsoeuer they cause was. To bring their matter to passe they litle cared to forsweare them selues, vnder that coloure cloked they all maner of dissimulacion, falshede, and vngodlines, so that the name of God (whyche ought to haue bene had i most reuerẽce was commonly than vsed) for a couerynge of all their mischefes, in so much the Prophete complayned and sayde, Iere. v. how we they coulde saye the Lord liueth, yet did they sweare to deceaue. Christ commeth, and bringeth salt and lyghte vnto the cõmaundementes, restorynge them agayne to their own natural meanyng, and right vnderstanding, and as hys

Gods worde hath but one true meaning

his father wolde haue them kepte, of euery Christen mā, for as God is but one, so hath his worde or commaundementes but one right and true meaninge, how so euer we turmoile or handle the. And where as they had taught to hate in herte, to couet another mans wyfe, and to deceiue hys neyghboure with a lie, was not forbydden of God, vnder payne of damnacion, but onelye the outwarde acte. But Christe sayth, he that is angrye with his brother, is in daunger of iudgemēt. He that seeth a woman and lusteth after her, shall taste the punishment that belongeth to a whoremōger: he ỳ thinketh one thig, and speaketh another, deceyueth hys neyghbour with a lye, or promise, shal haue ỳ punishmēt of a periurer. Therfore I saye vnto you, that you sweare not at all, but let your communication be, yea, yea, nay, nay, he saith twies yea and twyes nay, that is yea in hert, and yea in mouth, nay in herte, and naye in mouthe. And yf men, when that you meane truli, wil not beleue you bi your yea and nay, let them take hede (sayeth Basyle) for they shall taste the payne that belongeth to the vnbeleuers, therfore it is bothe folysshe and dampnable *when a man cannot be beleued by yea* and nay, without an othe, because he

Oure worde & herte must be alone.

Basyle.

wold

vnto customable swearers. Fol. 15
would be beleued to sweare. The Gos
pel (saith saint Jerome) permytted no Jerome.
maner of priuate othe, because the holy
language of a Christen, shoulde be so
faythfull, true & parfyte, that euery
sentence therof shuld be able to stande
for an othe. Verye vnsemynge is it to Joh. iii.
Christes swoorne soudyour, more to re
garde the darkenes than the lyght, for
the loue that thou beareste to a world
ly vanite (whiche thou oughteste not
so muche to esteme) thou wylt take thy
Lorde God to wytnesse. And so doeste He that
thou throw thy selfe into double dan- sweareth
ger, offendynge also in an other com- coueteth
maundement, for so canst thou not do,
onlesse thou vaynely couete.

And the lawe sayeth, thou shalte not Exo. xx.
couet. Doest thou not couet whā thou Psal. vi
inforcest thy self to sweare for a worl
ly thynge? and for a vyle creature ta-
kest God to wytnesse? yea, truly doest
thou, and for it forsakeste thy mayster
with Judas. Oh to ouermuche vany- pſ. xxxvi
tie is al the worlde geuen. Besides that
is sayde, for this consyderacyon dothe
Christ inhibite the al maner of priuate
swearinge, because thou canste not do He that
it, wythout some dishonour to his hea- sweareth
uēly father, marke the nature of thine dishono-
othe, whan thou doest sweare, and reth god.
thou shalte well perceyue it. In the cō-

maunde

munication, parauenture thou sayest, by God it is true that I haue sayde, or by the Lorde that made me it is so. Psal.ix. Here couplest thou thy Lord god with thy wickednes, and thy heauenly maker with thy synne without all reuerence, to shyfte the matter betwene the, se nowe how worshipfy thou hast marred hym. Besides al this, in taking god to witnesse, thou makest hym iudge of the thing to auenge it of yf it be falsse, but in the last poynte: Thou braggest also after this sorte, by my faith I will performe, that I haue promised, or by Jesus Christ I will do this thing or ỳ thing, marke well this short sētence of myne, God will not geue power to any mā to do or performe that thing which is not done after his worde, & here by another cōtrarye, goddes commaundemēt doest thou bind thy selfe to do that thing which is not in thy power to do, neither hast thou God vpō thy side to geue the strēgth to doe it, because it is not done (although it were neuer so true) before a iudge, whyche Goddes worde requireth. And so doest thou lose thy saluacion and frēdship in Christe, with his name sealest thou an obligacion to do that thing, whereby thou art defeated of all thyne inheritaunce. Is this thinkest thou a pleasaunt thynge Job.34. & xxxvi. vnto

vnto customable swearers. Fol.16
vnto hym? All thys set a parte, yf it
shuld chaūce that some worldly trouth
were not in thy wordes (beside con-
scyence) thou shouldest vtterly dis-
myshe the opinion of thy faythe, and to
shame thy Lorde Jesus, whome thou 1.Ti.vi.
hast taken to wytnes with the, for thy
trueth and honest. In this also doeste
thou testifye, that thou beleuest hym to
be no righteous God, nor yet a iudge
that wyl ones before al the world con-
dempne thy futtel trade of falshed and
hypocrysye.

Fynally thou makest as though God
were wel contented with thy dissimu-
lation, and as thoughe he had a greate
sporte at the matter, to se thy crafty cō-
ueyaunce, & legerdemayne in compas-
sige thy Christē brother or neighbour
to deceyue hym with an othe, for whō
Christ spared not to geue his life, and Ro.viii
to bestowe his moste precious bloude.
And thus whersoeuer thou becomest
these, viii. discōmodities goeth wt the.
The holy name of god is dishonoured,
his Gospel of saluacion is cōtempned,
hys swete promises ar not beleued, nor Esa.xxv
yet his sharp thretninges feared. Wher 1.Cor.i.
as thou art in place, these vngentle fa- 1.John.vi
utes doest thou minister and none other, Pse.xiii
to do thy maister the deuel a pleasure.
With such a true seruaunte arte thou

vnto

vnto hym that were as thou accompanyest, Christ shal haue but dishonour. Consequētly whan thou swearest vpon the Byble or Gospell conteynynge the scriptures & wordes of God, thou compārest the trueth of thy matter, to the trueth of them, and wouldest haue it so alowed, thā yf thou be a liar, thou harcely desyrest hym, not to accomplysche vnto thy behoue hys promyses of mercy therin conteined. But contrary vnto it, to bryngе vpō thee, the hole vengeaūce, curses and plages, therein threatened, to al yll doers. Whā thou swearest by the bodye of Christe, thou greatlye dyshonourest hys glorifyed nature, includynge thy hole healthe, iustificacion, redempcion, and attonement in God. And thou doest as much as in the lyeth (like as ꝑ holy doctours confesse) to plucke him oute of heauen with violence, & to crucify him againe a fresshe. Whan thou swearest also by *the sacrament of God* (as it is cōmon ōthe wyth the) both the swete frutes of thy Baptyme, and of ꝑ holy supper of the Lord doest thou handle so vnreuerently, as thou ware at defiaūce with them bothe.

Deute. xxvi.

In like case whan thou swearest by any creature, as by this sunne, by this eyze, by this light, or by this good day thou

thou doest not onely breake ỹ commaũ-
dement of thy Lord God, but also thou
doest bynde those creatures wh ch he
hath prouided to serue thy neades, to
serue thy wicked vanite, rendring him
no thankes but blasphemy for his gif-
tes. What thou swearest by other cre-
atures of god as by this bread, drinke
meat, or salte, with suche lyke. Doest
ỹ any other than blaspheme the gyuer
of thē: nay surely. And besydes ỹ thou
desirest hym to auenge them of the, yf
thou lye. Paraduenture thou wylte yet
aske me this questiō, may I thā swere
no maner of othe, for my pastyme: yes,
and yf thou wilte in thy pastyme geue
thy selfe hole vnto the deuel. But christ
hath geuen the a strayghte commaun-
dement to the contrary, that thou shalt
not sweare at all, and bewreth the that
yf thou be his seruaunte, thy commu-
nicatiō shal be none other, but yea, yea
and naye, naye. All other (sayeth he) is
of euyll.

we may
not swe-
re for
our pas-
tyme.

Now we yf thou thinke thy wyt better
than his, or that he is no holsome tea-
cher for the. ỹ maiest do it for thy plea-
sure, and go to the deuel for it: who can
let the, not thus cōtented, haplye thou
wylt yet reason further, Nay. For so
much as I know swearinge is a blas-
phemy, I wil for my pleasure swere

by the deuyl, or by an ydoll, to spyghte
thē with it. I am glad thou hast ones
graunted me that swearinge is a spite-
full blaphemy: let it not thā defyle thy
Christē lippes neither spight thy lord
god with it from henceforthe. nor yet
his holy saīctes and creatures. consi-
der first that it is thy Christen dewtie
to be no blasphemer. And nexte vnto
this, that god by his expresse commaū
dement hath vtterly forbyddē the that
byndē of swearing, you shal not swere
(saieth your liuing god) by the names
of straunge goddes, neither let any mā
heare thē proced out of your mouthes.
Neither make mencion (sayeth Josue)
nor yet sweare by the names of theyr
goddes, &c. God wyll refuse thē for his
chyldren (saieth Hieremy) yea, and vt-
terly forsake thē, which sweare by thē
that are no goddes. I will destroye all
them (saith God by hys prophete So-
phonye) that sweare in Melchon. &c.
Thinke thā it is vnlawful for ꝑ to swere
by no maner of thing, for thy pleasure
neyther by heauen nor earth, deuil, nar
ydolle, for al that is more than yea, and
nay is plainly of wickednes. Our wor-
des are ꝑ outward testimonies of our
inward hartes. And therefore they
ought to be so substancial as to be wor
thy a beleue wout anothe. So single a

pure

we may not swer by the deuyl.

Deu. 6. c
Exo. 23.

Josu. 11.

Hier. vc

Soph. 1.

vnto customable swearers. Fol. 18
purcoughte oure loue to be towardes
our neighbour in our dayly occupyng,
that no maner of craft shuld be founde
therin. Dampnable it were to deceyue
our brother with a lye, and much more
dampnable to seale it with a false othe.
They of the olde tyme thoughte it no
faute to sweare in a matter of trueth,
but we haue now a new scole maister,
and ought by his owne doctryne, to be
no longer babes, but to be muche more
perfect then they were. Nowe ought
suche brotherly loue to raigne amonge
vs, that one shoulde haue no stomake,
harte, nor desire to hinder, hurt, or dis
please another. The eye shuld seker ꝑ
profyte of the hande, and the hande the
commodite of the foote, as members of
one body in Christ, the one being care-
full for the other. The one should be so
faythefull to the other, that neyther
shoulde be nede to sweare, nor ꝑ other
nede to put him to an othe. And surely
there is none othe made betwene neyb-
bour and neyghboure, but one of thē,
or both offēdeth dedlye. And it is he ꝑ
beareth the trueth, and will not beleue
hym wythoute an othe, and so compel-
leth hym to sweare, or elles the other
that without al occasiō inforceth him
selfe lightely to sweare, or both for cō-
panye sake.

We ought to be no lōget babes.

The frutes of a right Christē.

Ecc.xxiii Customable swearinge is very dangerous, though we did not lye at all, for so much as it doth depriue the name of the Lorde of hys dewe reuerence and feare. And so much vanite of wordes is in our dayly commonyng & occupyinge that we haue one with a nother, that

Prou.x we cā not chose but lye in many thinges Which to cōfirme wt en other, though we entende no fraude, is to take the holy name of God in vayne, and vnreuerently to vse it against the seconde cōmaundement. If it be dampnable of itself to lye, of purpose to deceyue, how much more dampnable is it than blasphemously to colour it with the name of God, besydes the callynge vnto him for swyfte vengeaunce vpon our owne selues for so doynge, truly we lytle know what we do in such customable swearing. Therfore accounte we it necessary to admonish you yet farther as cōcerning your priuate swearing. For according vnto that is said afore wylled vs Iesus ꝑ son of Sirach (whiche

Ec.xxiii Sapi.14 wrote ꝑ boke of Ecclesiasticus) ꝑ we should in no case accustome our selues in swearing, lest we fal into more depe inconuenences, and so tast the plages belongynge therunto. For of customable swearynge commeth the dampnable vyce of periury.

If a mā shal vse cōmonly to sweare, he can not chose but many tymes damnably forsweare him selfe. And he that customably smyteth sometyme he shal smyte vnto death. That a man hath in custome he shall do at all times but he shal not at all times refrayne it. What the fearcfull sentence of God is against swearers, ꝑ scriptures plētuously shewed. The Lorde (saith Moyses) will not holde him gyltlesse that taketh hys name in vayne. The man that vseth much swearing (saith Jesus Sirach) shal be ful of iniquite, and neuer shall the plage departe frō his house. All theues and swearers are vnder one curse of God after Zacharie. Stoned was he by the law, that blaspheamed the name of the Lord, in Israel. If the plage goeth neuer from them whyche are contynuall swearers, howe canne it goe fromme theym that are contynuall periurers?

Deut. v
Exo. xx.
Eccle. 23
Zacha. v
Leui. 24

Tell vnto me my frende (sayth John Chrisostome) what doest thou profyte by thy swearyng? If thine aduersarie shuld thynke the to sweare a ryght, he wold neuer cōpel the to it. But because he thynketh the therby to become a periure therfore enforceth he the to an oth. Seldō hath the priuate othe a good cōclusion. But happly thou wilt saye. I

Homi. xl in 1. cap. Matth.

cā not sel my wares, onles I do swere.
An obiection. Or my better beleueth me not, onlesse I make him an othe. Wherunto I answere: Rather be cōtented to haue thy wares vnsolde and to loose thy money, than thy saluacion in Christe. Reason faythfully wyth thy conscience, and let thy soule be more dere vnto the, thā thy corruptible substāce. For though thou lose part of thy substaunce, yet mayest thou lyue, but yf thou loose God, thou canst not liue. A greater rewarde shalt thou haue for losynge of it in the feare of God, than yf thou haddest geuē it in almes. For that is done with payne, for the loue of the Lorde requireth a more worthy crowne thē that is done without payne.

Mat. 16. Luk. 12. The soule is better thā wares. John. 6. and. 17. 2. Tim. 2 Apo. 11.

Moreouer I counsel the as my frend (sayth Chrisostome) yf thou be a trew Christen, that thou neuer compell anye other man to sweare. For whether he sweareth ryght or wrong, thou art not without daunger afore god, cōsidringe that Christ (whose seruaūt thou oughtest to be) hath gyuen the here a sore cō maundement to the contrary. Besydes that, thoughe his oth were true, yet is not thy conscience cleare from periury for so much as the matter beyng doubtfull vnto the, thou puttest hym to the daūger therof. And if it were false, thē hast

Chrisos. Com. 44

A great daūger to swere

vnto customable swearers. Fo. 20
hast thou enforced him to periury, and so for lack of Christē charite lost bothe hys soule and thyne owne, for whome Christ suffred his death. Worse is he (saith S. Austē) thā an homicide, that compelleth a man to swearе, whom he knoweth to forswere himselfe. For the homicide sleeth but the body, where as he sleeth the soule: yea, two soules rather. That is to say his soule whom he cōpelled to swere, and hys owne soule for so compellyng him. *De sermone domini in monte.*

O vndiscrete personne, what so euer thou art that compellest an other man to swearе. Lytell knowest thou what thou doest therby. Muche more is it to his profit then to thyne. For that periurye is to his lucre, & to thy losse. For he hath the money, nothing remaining vnto the but thy part vnto the periury, with the curse & plage therof. He that careth not to lye, regardeth as lytle to forswere him self. And lyke as he that lyeth offendeth sore the verite, so doeth he that is periured forsake bothe God and all godlyneſſe. Thus are the cōmaūdemētes neglected, & neyther God nor our neyghbour regarded. No marueile therfore though the lord knowing our infirmite, and how swift we ar to swering cast away our soules, did first inhibite vs periury, and thā al maner of swea- *Christost. vbi prius.*

Why Christe forbod swering

Gregorius in homile quadam.

rynge. He hathe forbydden swearynge (saith sayncte Gregory) that we should the more easely auoyde al maner of occasion to periure. He that feareth god, without an othe confesseth the veritye. He that feareth him not, will not with an othe confesse it.

He therfore þ doubteth not to breake goddes commaundement in swearyng doubteth not to forswearе him selfe for auauntage. Take hede also (saith Chrisostome) you that wyll be rekened for spiritual men. Very swyftye are to ofter the sacred Gospel vnto them that sweare, where as ye oughte to teache the contrary. If a man may not (saieth Origene) in euery light matter swere, no more may they þ haue auctoritye, for euery lyght mater compel a man to sweare. How we can you be cleare from periury, that minister þ occasyō? May be that beareth fire to the burnyng of an house be fre from the burning of it? Or he from the slaughter of a man that bringeth the weapon wherwith he is slayne? nay surely. But he that geueth occasiō to periury, must nedes be a partener in the same. Withdraw the fyre, and there shall be no burnyng. Cōuay awaye the sword, and there shalbe no murther committed. Sequest or swearynge, and there shall be no periurye.

The pryestes.

Chrisost. de prius.

Ofte

Oft swearing (saith Isidorus) bringeth mā to an vse. And that vse leadeth to a custome whiche bringeth in perjurye. No nede hath the verytie of an othe, where the promise is faithfull & sure. Li. 4. sen. loquarum

If this is spokē for thē that sweare by the Lorde temerously. Muche more execrable is the wyckednesse of them that swere by the creatures, and more grevous the offence, than of them that sweare by him onely. For heuen, earth, the elementes, and creatures hathe he made to serue him in mans occupteng and not ỳ men should sweare by them. In the lawe is it also strayghtly commaūded, ỳ none shuld be taken to witnesse in the trueth but God the aucror of all truth. He therfore that sweareth by heuē, by erth, or by any other thing els, he maketh it equall to the verytie, and so alloweth it for his God. For of no lesse value maye that thinge be that is taken to wytnesse, than is the verite it selfe whyche standeth in tryall. A shamefull ydolatoure therfore becommeth he that taketh anye other thynge than God to wytnes in the verite: yea, though it be neuer so true that he sweareth. to swere by creatures. Hier. v. Deut. 12. Colos. i. Deu. vi. Hier. v. ydolatry Nu. 30.

For he perfourmeth not vnto the lord his othe, but vnto ỳ elementes & creatures,

tures, and so sinneth double. First he offendeth in breakynge the commaundement, secōdly in that he maketh a God of that he sweareth by. This caused S. Hierome to say in this cōmentary vpō sayntt Mathewes gospel, that our sauiour did not inhibit swearynge by god, before a iudge, so that it were in a faithful cause, but by heauen and earth, by Jerusalem and our head, & such lyke. For it was graunted to the people in Moyses lawe for a rule, that lyke as they were commaūded to offer their sacrifices vnto god because they should not offer thē to idols, so were they permytted to sweare by the lord god. Because it was thought better for them to geue their faith (which is therin required) vnto god thā vnto deuils. For the Jewes vpon a corrupte custome, were muche geuen to swearynge by the elementes.

Hieronimus super Math.

Math. v and

Consider therfore that it was not for nought that Christe commaunded you neither to sweare by heuen nor earth, cytie nor temple, nor yet by the heere of your owne heades. Where as the byshoppes & spirituall lawers sytteth in consistorye, a smal matter is it reckened to sweare by the lorde, and therfore cōpell they menne to sweare by the Gospell as by an hygher thing. As though

to swere vpon the gospell bake.

the

the creature were aboue the creator.
Not vnlike to the pharises, which estemed the gold offred in the temple much greater than the temple that sanctified the golde, and the offeringe vppon the aulter much better then the aulter that sanctifyed the offeringe. In this proue they them selues not onely blynde, but also blynde leaders of the blynde. Mat. 23. Mat. 15
Muche more passeth those beastly belye goddes vpon the feadynge of their wretched bodyes thā vpon god which is the lyfe of their soules. Their Wastes and many sacryfyces are the cause why they esteme an othe made vpō the Ghospell booke to be farre aboue that othe which is made vpon the eternall God, and not the verite which the gospell contayneth. Phil. 3
O wretched ydiotes (sayeth Chrisostome) the scriptures are ordeyned for god, & not god for ỳ scriptures. Greatter is the Lord that sanctifieth the gospel, than the gospel that is of the lorde sanctified. The Turkes or Mahometanes (whom we rekē to be a very execrable secte) hath the holy name of god in such reuerēce, ỳ they neuer sweare by it, vnles they be by most vrgent necessite compelled. Neither commit they the administracion of their comō welthes to anye man whome they knowe to be

homi. 44. sup Mat.

Gaillel. mus trispa latanus.

to be a swearer, be he neuer so riche, so lerned, wise, learned, courageous, or of noble byrth. For we that matter passeth amonge vs Christianes, all the world knoweth: yea, though we say nothyng of the periurie which dayly reigneth among vs to farre and to brode. And surelye thys dare I be bolde to saye, that all we knowe it is contrarye to the commaundemente, wyll, and pleasure of God, yet doth the most part of vs commit it.

1. Co. xii. Heb. xiii

And they that do it not, are not once moued with pitie (as it would become al Christen men) to se their brethren so perysh, or to se a lawful and charitable redresse for it. They also whiche hath the lawes in gouernaūce, vnto whom the iudgementes are committed, seketh not by harde correctiōs the amēdemēte of it but euery wher it reygneth vnpunyshed. A very lighte matter is swearing accounted nowe a dayes in euery mannes mouthe, hyghe and low, ryche and poore, ruler and comoner, preest and clarke, woman and childe, to the bitter contēpt of god. If they be in dalliaūce, playe, and sport, nothynge semeth vnto them pleasaunt, freshe, nor any thynge worthe, nothynge cherefull or lyue is be laughed at, vnlesse the communycacyon be myxed wyth the blasphemye

Ioannes Saliſburi enſis in policrati co.

All states delighte in blasphemye.

myne of Goddes name. If a matter shal be reasoned, or a storye rehersed in a companye, the tale shall want hys due circumstaunce, vnlesse it be garnished wyth othes. Eccl. 27.

Amõge ỹ ruffelinge rutters and galauntes of the worlde is not he reckened for a man of noble bloude, that can not swearе by heauen, by the elemẽtes, by the trone of god, by ỹ woũdes, bloude, crosse, in euery assembly, and in euerye place he cometh in. This is the comon rhetorik, the florishing, maner of speaking, the elcane fyne, pure, and bewtyful language of our baptised brode, of our holy Christen cõmunalte, bothe in lordes houses, and by shoppes houses, more lyke bedlem beastes thã Christianes: yea, more lyke deuils of hel than mẽ of reason ỹ grace. No faute findeth oure prelates in this, nor breake of Christen religion, nomore thã they do in the daylye huntynge of the stewes and other shameful abhominacions. But these they release ỹ their masse farynges for mony. For thẽ that reade the scriptures they can fynde out greuous punyshmentes, but not for these enormious excesses. This pretũptuose sacrilege, this wicked knauerye, thys malygnaunte myschefe agaynste God offendeth them nothing at al. Item Iohannes de nuges curialium. Fine tõges. Petrus Bleseus. By stoppes.

The

math 26. mar. xiiii

The Jewes rare their garmētes cuſtomably whā they hard goddes name blaſphemed. But who amonge vs ſheweth any maner of token þ he is ones but diſcontented wt it? where are thoſe godly lawes become that were wonte to beheade the blaſphemer or els ſtone hym vnto death? where are the epiſtles, pandectes, and inſtitutes of Juſtiniane þ Emperour þ wolde ſuffer no ſuch offences remayne vnpuniſhed? where are the ſtatutes ryal, that kinge Henry the fyft made alſo for ſweaters with in his own palace? that if he were a duke that did ſweare he ſhuld forfet, for euery time. xl.s. to the aydynge of poore people. Yf he were a Lorde or baron. xx.s. Yf he were a knyghte or a eſquyre. x.s. Yf he were a yeman. xl.d. Yf he were a page, a lackey, or a ſlaue, to be ſcourged naked eyther with a rod or els a whyppe. All this is now forgotten and gone.

Tearig of garmētes.

Theſwarer was be headed.

Valdemus in quodam ſermone.

The olde philoſophers abhorred the blaſphemye of god, the poetes and orators thoughte them worthy of greate punyſhementes, & we thinke nothinge leſſe. Cicero wylled that neither ſwearing nor promes made by othe ſhuld be vſed for feare of periurye. Sweare in no wyſe (ſaith Periander) yf thou canſt by any meanes auoide it. Yf thou be wyſe

The philoſophers abhorred ſwearig

Cicero in li de Offi.

be wyse (saieth Phocilides) thou shalt not sweare with thy will, thoughe the cause be neuer so good. If the matter lieth so (saith Pithagoras) þ þ muste nedes sweare, do it with great reuerēce. Periury (saith Menander) can neuer be hyd from God. Therfore rather lose thy matter thā sweare. For of hidden periury (saieth *Tibullus*) wil a mischefe folow either at one time or other. Se what a dangerous matter the prophane philosophers accounted swearynge that neuer knew Christ, and we account it nothing at all. They abhorred the wickednesse of it, and we take it for a myrie pastyme. *Tibullus lib. 1 elegia. ix.*

Men can seke out penalties, & make newe constitucions for them that laboure to kno we God, and to lyue after his lawes, but for them that spytefully abuse the name and glorye of God, we can fynde none at all. And no merueile cōsiderig we are the right sworne children of periurye. Who hath so largely bene periured as prelates, prestes, & religious? which at the receiuīg of their popish degrees hath forsworne the verite of god, whō in baptime they faithfully promised to stād by against al the deuels in hell, yea & wynge their lawes, doctrines, and doynges vnto þ touche stone (which is goddes word) & *Quotidiana experientia.*

1. Joh. 4 Galat. 6.

thou

Goddes word trieth all thinges.

thou shalte fynde that they labour nothinge els but the breaking of that promes. How vnreuerētly they haue vsed their othe of allegeaūce to their prīces and magistrates. I thinke ỹ cronicles kepeth not in scilence.

Ranulphus Cestrensis in policronica.

When Pascalis the bishop of Rome had swozne to be true vnto Henrye the fourth emperour, he gaue him therupō a writing which contayned also ỹ inuestiture of prelates. Not longe after that, whan he se hys tyme, he called in Rome a generall synode, where as he by counsell of his spirituall sozcerers breaking both othe and priuilege, dyd excōmunicate the good emperour, raised vp his sonne agaynste hym, deposed hym, emprisoned hym, and fynallye caused his body to be taken oute of the groūde at Leodium, and in a prophane place to be buried: yea, after his death the sonne (whome he made to persecute the father) dyd he also excommunicate, and greuously vexe. Ayber tragedye we haue of *Frederycus Barbarossa*, whōe Pope Alexander the third made his fote stole at Venis in the churche of saincte Marke, in the syghte of the whole multitude to ỹ rudiculous shame and rebuke of al the worlde. The nexte daye after he made hym to holde hys styroppe, and lyke a page to wayte

Abbas Vrspergensis in cronica.

vpon

hys ſtyrope and lyke a page to wayte vpon hys mule.

Serche the hiſtories alſo for thoſe tymes in the which the holy Biſchoppes of Rome aſſoyled the people frō the obedience of their lawful kinges. As zacharie ỳ firſt, which aſſoyled ỳ Frēche men from their othe to kynge Hyldetrick. Of Honorius the thirde, and Johan the .xxii. aſſoyltnge the Germanes frō their lawful emperours. Of Innocent the thirde aſſoyling our Engliſhemen of their true allegiaunce frō their good kynge Johan, and ſuche other to many to be reherſed, and ye ſhall fynde wonders concernynge ỳ matter Gyldas one of the moſt auncīēt writers of this nacion, much lamented the fylthy behauer ſwearynge, a periurye of his countremen the Brytones, kynge Iue, kynge Alfrede, kynge Edwarde, & diuerſe other made laudable cōſtitutiōs of penalties within this realme cōcernynge the ſame.

Gaguinus plaſina & Polidorus

Gildas in excido. Britannie.

Statutes againſt cuſtomable ſwearers

Kynge Edmōde made this lawe that they whiche were proued ones falſe & forſworne ſhould for euer be ſeperated frō Goddes congregation. Donaldus the kynge of Scottes made thys acte within his land that al periurers and comō ſwearers ſhuld haue their lippes ſeared with a burnynge hoote yron.

Hector boetius in hiſtoria Scotorum.

Which lawe saincte Lodowick kynge of Fraunce put ones in execucyon at Paris vpon a cytezen there for blas-phemynge the name of Christ, to ye ex-ample of other, and so caused it to be proclamed throughout his realme for a generall punishment.

A proclamation agaynste swearig

Iacobus Magerus in cronicis Flandrie. Vincentius in speculo hiſtorialiſ Ioſephus .4.li. ant. capi.vi.

Philippe erle of Flanders, made this constitucion wyn his erldome in anno. M.C.lxxviii. that he ye dyd forſweare hym ſelfe ſhould loſe his lyfe & goodes

In paralipomenon rerum memorabilium.

Item Philyp the kynge of Fraunce, whom ſo euer he perceyued, that either in tauerne or anye where elles, ye all thoughe he were a great man of dignite that did blaſphemie the name of god he ſhuld be drowned. And cauſed a ſtrōge acte to be made of it a lytle before hys death, & lefte it vnto his ſucceſſors. Al ſo Ioſephus counſell us this. That he which blaſpheweth ſhould be ſtoned, & then hanged vp by the ſpace of one daye, and ſo taken downe and buryed without al maner of honour. Maximi-lianus ye emperour made alſo a decre, *that whatſo euer he were, that was a* comō ſwearer ſhould for the fyrſt time loſe a marke, and yf he were not contēt with that, ſhuld loſe his heade, which acte he & the ſtates of the empyre com-maūded to be publyſched tuu tymes in the yere at eſter, whitſontyde, aſſump-cyon

cion of our lady, and at Christemas.

In certen regions are yet to this day othes so restrayned, that what so euer he be that sweareth, he shal eyther lose a fyngar, an eare, or els his tonge. For periury was the noble cytie of Troye lost, as wytnesseth not onely Virgyle with other prophane auctors, but also S. Iustine in his third boke & seconde Chapter *de ciuitate dei*, and so hath many other cities els. Tullius cicero hath in his fyrste boke *de officijs* that Marcus regulus a Romaine, & a Pagane regarded so muche an othe, þ he ones made, that he had rather to throw him self into most miserable captiuitie, and cruel deth of his enemies thā to breake it, and so to become a periure. S. Iustine affirmig the same also in his first boke, and. xb. Chapter *de ciuitate dei*.

Many cities hath bene destroyed for periury. *Idem augustinus.*

A wōderful narratiō hath S. Greg. in the forth boke of his dialoges, of a chylde of. v. yeares of age beinge in his fathers armes possessed of a deuyll for swearing and blaspheminge the name of God. Besides the terrible examples of the scripture in Nemroth, Pharao, Hieroboam, Sennacherib, Benedab, Achab, Nabuchodonosor, Holofernes, Antiochus, Nicanor, Herode, & suche lyke. The sonne of the Israelitysh widow was for blaspheminge of þ name Leui. 24.

The blasphemer was stoned.

of God stoned vnto deathe in the desart. For blasphemie of the seruaunres of Sennacherib the kynge of the Assirianes vpō the angel of the Lord slewe an hundred and iiii. score thousand of his hoost. The wicked quene Jesabel was for the same vice throwne out of a window trodde vpō with horses and had her flesshe deuoured of dogges. Herodes Antipas for beheading Johan baptist to pertourme his wicked othe was exiled into Icons, and ther departed in most miserable perury. In swearing vpō Peter both denye and forsake hys Lord and master Jesus Christ. Cōsidre by these and by other lyke exāples what the abhominacion of swearinge is, and what vengeaunce of the Lorde hangeth ouer it.

4. re. xix

4. Reg. c

Mat. vi.

mat. xix.

The Scithianes & Parthianes with other heathē people had lawes against lying and swearing, whō they would in no wyse disobeye. We haue ye great cōmaundement of god with the gospel of Jesus Christ, which are lawes far passig their lawes. What deuel of het shall holde vs backe more than them, that we shall not regarde them? If we haue a lorde god which create all at the begynnynge, and now gouerneth all t e our behouc. If we haue a father whi c hath loued vs, a Christ which hath re deemed

Ero. xx.
Leu. xix
Math. v
rom. viii
Tit. ii
Joh. xv.

med vs, and an holy ghost which dayly
conforteth vs, where is the faythful o-
bedience we owe the? If he be our god,
why do we not feare him. If he be our
heuenly lorde, why do we not honoure
hym? If he be oure father, why do we
not hartely loue him? If he be omnipo
tent, why do we not reuerence him? If Psal. x.
he be wise, why do we not lerne of hi? John. i.
If he be iuste of his promise, & true of
his worde, why do we not lothe, heare
him, beleue him, and folowe him? Job. 13.
If he be a master, why do we not serue Judit. 8
him? yea, why do we not once amende,
at his most fearful threatenynges? Is
it in the gospel ernestly spoke vnto vs
Christianes, or vnto deade stones? Let
your communication be, yea, yea, and
naye, naye. Whatsoeuer is more than
that, it commeth of the very deuyll.
Not vnto a rotten posse, nor yet vnto a Deut. v
dumme beast was it sayd. Thou shalt Exo. xx.
not vsurpe the name of the lord God in Eccl. 23.
vayne. For the lorde will not holde hym
gyltles that blasphemeth his name.
The plage shall not departe frome the
house of the swearer. But it was spo-
ken vnto vs, to whom god hath geuen
reason, discretion, remembraunce, vnder-
standing, wytte, conscience, fayth, and
grace, yf we wyl applye oure selues to
the occupying of the. A man that were

in trauerse of lād, & shuld lose it vnlesse he told his tale wisely, wold take good
Mat. di. hede vnto his wordes rather than he
Luk. xii. wold lose it. And we for losing our soules (which Christ to witnes, are much more precious) will take no hede at all but through our blasphemous langage and daily swearing suffer al to go vnto nought. We must maruele many tymes yͤ the lorde doth punishe vs wyth derth, warre, pestilence, & cruel exactions of tyrāntes. But we ought muche more to maruaile, yͤ heuen reineth not
Gen. xix. wild fire & brimstone vpō vs as vpon
Num. 16 Sodome & Gomorre, and that the erth openeth not vpon vs, & swalow vs in wyth Chore, Dathan, & Abiron. For so vnreuerently vsyng the name of God with our outraging tonges, as the filthie myre in the stretes that we spurne forth wyth our fete. Oh how could the
Psa. 83. lorde suffre such iniury, were he not e-
Johel. ii ternally mercyful? how could he pacyently beare it, wer he not gracious, pyteful, longe suffering, and redy to pardone wickednes? Such cōtinual swearers may wel be compared vnto those spightfull tormentours that spatled in
Mat. 26. Christes face, that mocked him with a
Mar. 14 rede, crowned wyth thorne, & saluted him with, *Aue rabbi*. Not vnlyke also are they vnto those pyatlyng Jewes &

scor-

vnto customable swearers. fo.28.
scornefull hipocrytes, priestes & Pha- Luke.23
risees, that went vp and downe by the Mat.27.
crosse whan Christ hynge vpon it, beck-
ing w̄ their heades, and casting abrod
their armes, thinking that he could not
do so muche as once saue himselfe.

Lorde geue them repentaunce wyth
grace once to detest that abhominable
vyce, & not wyth Pharao to haue their
hertes so hardened þ they synfully pe-
rishe in the red sea. A familiar exam-
ple haue I redde in a bohe called *precep*
torium Iohannis Beets, Whome I wyshe
they had in dayly remēbraunce, for one
naturall properte in it of the childe to-
wardes his father. A certayne manne
there was (saith he) þ supposed by his
wyfe to haue had.iii. sonnes. Upon a
day as they chaunced to varye, she cast
in his teeth that there was but one of
them his owne. And which was he, she
would neuer tell hym vnto the verye
deathe. It chaunsed thys man as hys
tyme was come, to depart frō þ worlde,
bequeathynge vnto thys vnknowen
sonne of his, al his landes and goodes.
As thys matter came before the lawe,
the iudge anon had in remēbraūce the
wyse facte of Salomon cōcernyng the
two womē which striue for a childe, &
thought to vse with these.iii. yong mē
contendyng for the heritage alyke po-

Ioannis Beets in preceptorē precep. 2 expos 3. capi. 4.

3.Reg.3. Sapi.7.

lyte. Fyrst he caused their dead father to be tyed vp hard vnto a poast, & than commaunded them to shote ernestly at him. Promysynge that he which most depely persed into his flesshe, shoulde haue rēdred vnto him the patrimonye.

The fyrst and the seconde dyd shote. The thyrde abhorrynge it as a thynge moost vnnaturall, would in no case do it, but sore rebuked hys brethren for so doynge. And sayd: he had muche rather to loose it, than to do so vncomlye an acte. But thys was iudged the naturall sonne of that man, and so enioyed the inheritaunce of hys father. The work of nature, is wonderful & secrete, Heb. vi. Apoc. xi

Like iudgement is to be had of these newe crucifyers of Christe, as the doctours doth cal them. No naturall children of God are they, regenerate of the spirite, but verye bastardes, borne of flesshe and bloude. Not the chyldren of promyse they are wyth Isaac, but the carnall chyldren of bondage wyth Ismaell, to whome belongeth none heretage in Christ. These be no naturall poyntes of a louynge sonne to buffette and beate hys father, or to teare the flesshe from his bones. To name hym in his moost anger and spyghte, or to spytte him out of his mouthe wyth crueltie and vengeaunce. But they are the fruites of an vnreasonable beaste, Gala. 4. gene. 21. The frutes of bastardes.

of

vnto customable swearers. fo.30
submytte thy affeccyons and appetytes vnto reasone, and se that thy reason be euermore obedient vnto the rules of laythe, contayned in the Scryptures.

Flee frō excesse and riote. Shunne the companye of them that be blasphemous and vicious. Carrye wyth thee where so euer thou goest, a sure intent and purpose to leaue that vyce. Detest it greatelye in all other men. Consider what felycite thou shalt lose and what infelicite thou shalte winne yf thou still vse it. And euermore withdrawe those thynges that myghte occasion the vnto it. Hyde thy purpose, and thou shalte not be robbed. Laye aside thy swearde, and thou shalte not slee. Withdraw excesse, and thou shalt not be dronke. Breake thee of thyne yll customme, and thou shalte no longer swearе.

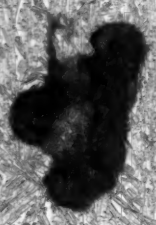
Hauinge these consyderations wyth suche lyke, thou mayest sone leaue it yf thou wilt. These remedies haue I shewed the, and these Godlye admonyshmentes haue I geuen the, as one so intyerlye hongering thy soules profite in my inwarde spirite as myne owne. Cōsider how thy merciful father hath planted in the his own image, and left

in

A Christen exhortacion.

in thy frayle vessell his incomparable treasure. Render it not agayne vnto him deformed with vice, & defiled with synne. But seke to be founde in the day of hys commynge wythout spotte, that thou mayest receaue the inestimiable reward, prouyded for them that loue him trewlye.

Amen.



☞ The maner of sayinge grace after the doctrine of holye scripture. fol.

¶ Grace afore meate.

THe eyes of all loke vnto thee, O Lorde, and thou geuest them their foode in due season: Thou openest thyne hande, and fyllest euery lyuynge creature wyth thy blessynge.

¶ Our father which art in heauen.

¶ Grace after meate.

Thankes be vnto the, o Lorde god almyghty, moost deare father of heauen, for geuinge vs our foode in due seasō, for openynge thy merciful handē, and for fyllinge vs with thy plentiful blessynge. And we beseche the for thy sonnes sake Jesus Christe, not onelye to preserue vs alwaye from abusynge of the same, but also to lēde vs thy grace that we may euer be thankful vnto the therfore. Amen.

¶ Another grace.

☞ Grace afore meate.

I know (sayeth the apostle) and am full certified in the Lorde Jesu, ỹ there

The maner of sayinge grace.

is nothing vncleane of it selfe: but vnto him that iudgeth it to be vncleane, to him is it vncleane. But yf thy b other be greued ouer thy meate, thē walkest thou not now after charite. Destroy not with thy meate, him for whō Christe dyed.

O our father which art in heauē. &c.

¶ Grace after meate.

Thankes be vnto the, o lord God almighty (moost deare father of heauen) for certifyinge vs by thy blessed word, that all kyndes of meates are cleane. And we beseech the lende vs thy grace, that we may alway thākfully receaue the same not onely without superstycion or scrupulosite of cōscience, but also without greuinge or offending our brethren: And so to walke in the waye of God in loue and charite, that with our meate we neuer destroye hym, for whome thy sonne Jesus Christ dyed aswel as for vs. Amen.

¶ Another grace.

¶ Grace afore meate.

Let not our treasure therfore be euel spoken of. For the kyngedō of God is not meate and drinke, but ryghteouse and peace and ioye in the holy goost.

O our father which art in heauen. &c.

☞ Grace after meate.

Thankes be vnto the o lord God almightie

after the doct. of holy scripture. For almighty (moost deare father of heauen) for openyng vnto vs thy blessed word, which is our treasure, our perle: yea, & oure riches more precious then ether golde or precious stone. And we beseech the, though corporal meate and drinke be no parte of thy kyngedom, yet order thou vs so in receauyng the same, that we neuer geue occasion of slaundringe thy worde, or offendynge the weake. Amen.

☞ Another grace. ☜

¶ Grace afore meate.

Meate doth not further vs vnto god, yf we eate, we shall not therfore be the better: yf we eat not, we shal not therfore be the worse. But take hede, that this your libertie be not an occasiō of fallynge vnto the weake.

* Oure father which art. &c.

¶ Grace after meat.

Thankes be vnto the o Lord God almighty (moost deare father of heauē) for layng vp our saluaciō, onely in thy selfe, and not in anye kynde of meate. And we beseche the, gyde vs so in the vse therof, that we maye folowe suche thinges as make for peace, and wherby we may edifye one another: And neuer to geue vnto the weake anye occasyon of fallynge from thy worde. Amen.

* Another

The maner of sayinge grace.

¶ Another grace.

☞ Grace afore meate.

Meates hath god created to be receaued with thankes, of thē which beleue and know the trueth. For euery creature of God is good, and nothynge to be refused that is receaued with thankesgeuynge. For it is sanctified by the word of God, and prayer.

O oure father, &c.

☞ Grace after meate.

Thankes be vnto the o Lord God almyghty (moost deare father of heauē) for ordeinig thy creatures to be meate, foode & sustenaunce vnto oure bodies, and hast sanctified them by thy blessed word. &c. We beseche ꝑ make vs so to increace in stedfastnesse of thy faith, in perfect knowlege of thy trueth, & in cōtinuaunce of feruent prayer vnto the. That to vs also thei may be sanctified & holy, & that we may euer both thankfully receaue thē, & vertuously vse thē to the good ensample of other. Amen.

¶ Another grace.

¶ Grace afore meate.

The father of mercy, & God of al consolacion geue vs grace to cōsente together into the knowlege of hys trueth, that we mave with one minde, and one mouth glorifye God the father of oure Lord Jesus Christ Amen.

¶ Our father. &c.

¶ Grace after meate.

Thankes be vnto the, o lord God almyghty (moost deare father of heaue) for bringinge agayne from death oure lord Jesus Christ, the great shepherde of the shepe, through the bloud of the euerlastinge testament. And we beseche the to make vs perfyte to do hys wyll, worcking in vs that which is pleasaut in his sight, ther we be not onelye the speakers of his worde, but the vnfayned followers of the same. Amen.

¶ Another grace.

¶ Grace afore meate.

Christ which at his last supper gaue hym selfe vnto vs, promysynge his body to be crucified, and hys bloude to be shed for our synnes, bicsse vs & oure meate. Amen.

Our father. &c.

¶ Grace after meate.

Thankes be vnto the, o Lord god almighty (moste deare father of heauen) which at this tyme hath fed vs wyth meat not only that perisheth, but with thy word whiche abydeth into euerlastinge lyfe. Graunte moste mercyful father, that we hauynge the knowledge of thy word, may also practyse ỹ same in our conuersacion, that we bothe inwardlye louynge and vnfaynedlye lyue

ayngethy holy worde, maye after this
lyfe lyue with the for euer. Amen.

Receaue your meate wout grudging.
Take hede ye neuer abuse the same.
Geue thankes to for euery thynge.
And alwaye praise his holy name.
Who so doth not is sore to blame.
No cursed ensample se that ye gyue
Thus doth the gods worde teache you to
(lyue
What so euer ye do in worde or dede,
do all in the name of our Lorde Jesus
Christ, geuinge thankes vnto
God the father by
hym.
✠

A shorte instructiō to the worlde.

To kynges and Princes.

We lerned ye kynges and vnderstāde
Embrace the trueth of Christes word
Your hartes be all in gods hande
He is you kynge, your prynce & lord.
Stablysh no law that maketh discorde
But do as dyd kynge Ezechias
Dauid, Iosaphat, and Iosias.

To Judges.

Accepte no personne in iudgemente:
Wrest not the law, kepe wel your syse
To wronge for bybes do not cōsente
For they do blynde the eyes of ỹ wyse
Thus scripture byddeth you more thē
And for to haue such properties (twise
As Iethro tolde to Moyses.

To Counceiours.

A faythful man wyl kepe counceil
And ther is welth wher many such be
Beware of falfe Achitophel
The counceil of god must stande trulye
Ye can it not destroye verely.

Kepe

Kepe truth and fayth with secretnesse
And further the cause of godlinesse.

¶ To Chamberlaynes.

Beware of Thares and Bagathan
Lest treason in the chambre be sowne
For yf the court be ruled by Aman
Doyr Mardocheus is ouerthrowne
But whē ꝑ truth is thoroughly knowē
He shall be founde a faythfull Iue
And to his prince a subiect true.

¶ To Stewardes.

Spēd not your masters goods I warne
But be faythfull in your office
For though ye take therin some payne
Ye haue of Christ a swete promyse
Kepe well your rekenyng more & lesse
Be faythfull euer in great and small
And christ will you good stewardes cal

¶ To Treasurers.

Ye ꝑ haue treasure in your keppynge
Committed to you for a season
Be alwaye sure of your rekenynge
As equite wylled and good reason
Jesus Syrac taught this lesson
To set a locke where manye bādes be.
It is no shame nor dishonestie.

To

¶ To Controllers.

Go thorow the court for Christes sake
And where ye spye any thing abused
Do your office, and some payne take.
That vdelnesse may be refused.
Greate mens houses are accused.
To be infecte with vncleannesse.
With pryde, with othes, & wt excesse.

¶ To preestes.

Flatre not at al, but preach gods word
Rebuke euery euyl condicion.
Thinke on your dewty to god ỳ Lorde
And forget not his commission.
Hyde not the trueth for promocion.
Be true apostles in worde and harte.
And playe not secretly Judas parte.

All other officers great and smal.
Whose whole deuties I do not know.
Do th gods word aseyte and call.
Whether their estate be hye or lowe.
None in his callynge to be slowe.
But euery man in his busynesse.
To watch & worke with faithfulnesse.

And within the forsaid doctryne.
Is contayned the whole dewtye.
How al subiectes shuld drawe the lyne.

Of

A Godly instruction
Of fayth of trueth and honestie
And no man for to go awrye
But euery one in his tryenge
To shew the frute of gods lernynge

Wher any vice now is occupyed.
Ouer in this world as there is muche
It should right well be amended.
If all rules wil rebuke suche.
And if preachers the churche wold touch
Where men now ware in synne so ryfe
They should right gladly mende their
lyfe.

And yf all other officers
Will do their beste, and be diligente
Then shal they haue right good tiuers
And folowers of gods cõmaundement
Of good warning folowth amẽdmẽt
Which I pray god vs graũt and grue
That we with him in heauẽ may liue.

Amen.

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